Hike in Minimum Wage for Unorganised Sector

1795. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that no concrete progress has been made on the implementation and penalty fronts, nullifying any perceived gains to workers in the unorganised sector after the recently proposed hike in the minimum wages on national floor level;

(b) if so, the reasons for the delay even when Government had promised to put it on top priority list; and

(c) whether it is on the agenda of the Indian Labour Conference and if so, the details of the deliberations on the same?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SAHIB SINGH VERMA): (a) and (b) After the national floor level wage was increased to Rs. 50/- per day w.e.f. 1.9.2002 all the State Governments were requested to ensure that in none of the scheduled employments the minimum wages were less than the national minimum wages. The response of the State Governments has been quite encouraging. Majority of the States have already ensured that the minimum wages in all the scheduled employments are Rs. 50/- or more. All the States where minimum wages are less than the national minimum wage, are being requested to raise them to equal or above this level from time to time.

(c) No, Sir. However the issue of raising the national minimum wage to Rs. 66/- per day as worked out by the working Group set up to go into codification of the concept of minimum wage, listing out guidelines based on critical evaluation of various parameters and also study the problems in implementation of the minimum wages, was deliberated in the State Labour and Health Ministers' Conference on 18.9.2003. No decision has yet been taken to raise the National Minimum Wage to Rs. 66/- per day.

VRS/CRS and Retenchment of workers

1796. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUTIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state the total number of regular and contract employees who have gone for VRS, CRS and retrenchment in bank, insurance and all other public sector till date in view of the globalisation, privatization and downsizing of the workers?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SAHIB SINGH VERMA): As on 31.3.2002, 4.24 lakh employees of Central Public Sector Undertakings took VRS. In addition, about 1.02 lakh employees of Public Sector Banks took VRS, as on 31.3.2003. During 2003, till date, 1541 employees of the insurance sector have been separted through VRS. Besides this, during 1998 till 2003 (January-September), 4203 workers of Public Sector Undertakings were retrenched.

Exemption of exporters from Labour Laws

1797. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what is Government's position on exempting the rigid labour laws at least for exporters;

(b) the details of the recommendations of the Committee constituted for the above purpose; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SAHIB SINGH VERMA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Statutory dues of CPSU employees

1798. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the total statutory dues like P.F., Gratuity, VRS dues, Salary, etc. payable to employees of CPSU, as on date; and

(b) the time-bound action-plan to liquidate the same?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SAHIB SINGH VERMA): (a) The total outstanding statutory dues except gratuity, payable to employees to Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSU) were Rs. 1904.77 crore, as on 31.12.2002. The gratuity dues were 11.66 crore as on 31.3.2003.

(b) The Government has directed CPSUs to clear outstanding statutory dues of their employees in a time-bound manner.